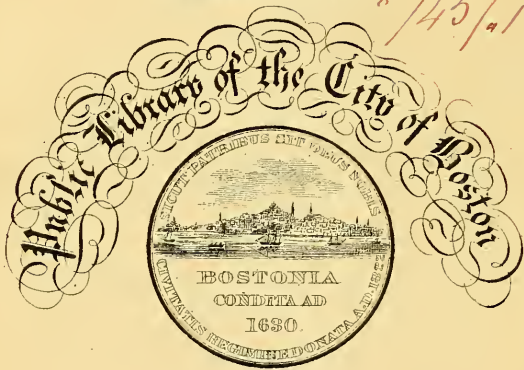


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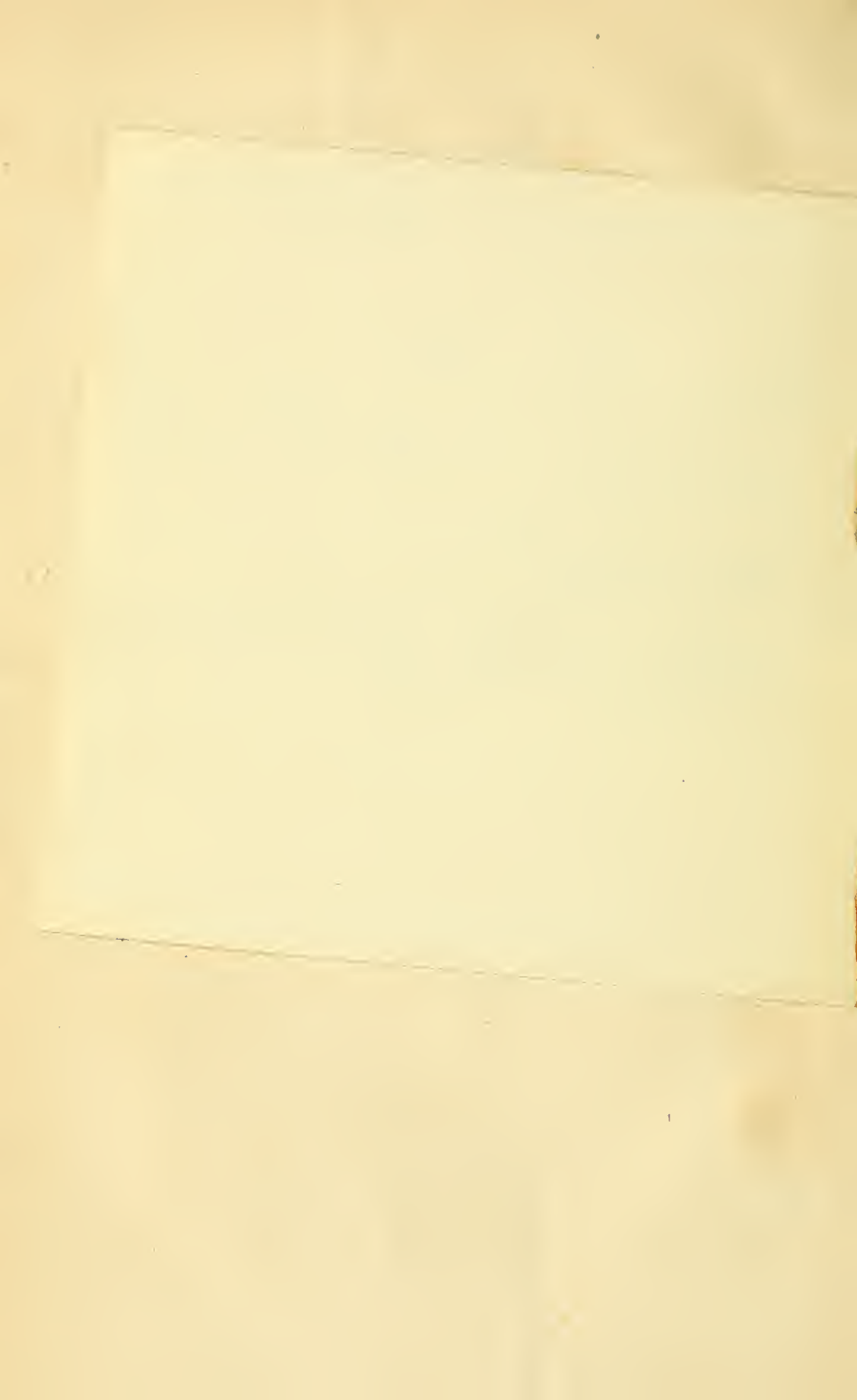
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**DR. WOODS'S SERMON**

ON THE DEATH OF

**MR. EVARTS.**

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1831



**S E R M O N**

**ON THE DEATH**

OF

**J E R E M I A H E V A R T S, E S Q.**

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY OF A. B. C. F. M.

DELIVERED IN ANDOVER JULY 31, 1831.

BY APPOINTMENT OF THE PRUDENTIAL COMMITTEE.

**BY LEONARD WOODS, D. D.**

Professor of Christian Theology in the Theol. Sem. Andover

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1831.





## SERMON.

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“WHO WENT ABOUT DOING GOOD,”—ACTS 10: 38.

WE have assembled, brethren and friends, to manifest our respect to the memory of a beloved servant of Christ, and our sorrow at his death. The respect and the sorrow we manifest on this occasion, are all from the heart. Yea, we feel more than we can utter. Nor shall we cease to feel, when the usual season of mourning is past. I say this in behalf not only of the particular relatives and friends, and of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions; but of all those in our community, who love the cause of Christ. I say it too in behalf of the missionaries we have sent forth, and in behalf of the multitudes who have been profited by their labors. In Palestine, in India, in the wilderness of America, and in the Isles of the Pacific, there will be great mourning for the beloved EVARTS. The very sound of his name excites the love of ten thousand hearts. It is the name of *a well known friend to the heathen,— a benefactor to the world.* Where is the man who holds a higher place in the estimation of the wise and good, or whose death would cause more tears? Long will Christians remember, and love, and honor him; and their children, taught by their example, will rise up and call him blessed.

Far be it from me to bestow lofty and unmeasured applause upon any man, especially upon the man whose death we now deplore. The highest honor I would give him is to say, that he was

a CHRISTIAN, and that, in imitation of his Lord and Master, *he went about doing good*. Higher praise than this I should feel to be incongruous. For our departed friend was of a humble heart and contrite spirit. In lowly prostration before God, he confessed his sins, mourned his unlikeness to Christ, disclaimed all personal worthiness, and abhorred himself. Even while he remained with us, he was among the last to seek or to desire applause. But now that he is gone to a world of perfect holiness, he will be forever deaf to all praise, except that which is ascribed to God and the Lamb.

In this solemn service, my wish is, first of all, to glorify God, as the author of all goodness and usefulness in man; and then, to contribute something to the improvement of Christians, particularly of those who now occupy, or who are hereafter to occupy important public stations; and to promote the sacred interests of Christianity at home and abroad. And this I shall attempt to do by showing, as far as my limits will admit, *by what attributes of character, and by what arrangements of divine providence, we are to account for the eminent usefulness of our lamented brother, the late corresponding Secretary of the American Board*.

The statements I shall make respecting him might be amply verified by a narrative of his life. But this does not fall within my design. Such a narrative, however, involving, as it naturally would, our Foreign-Missionary operations for twenty years, and other interests of great moment, will, I hope, be seasonably given to the public by some man, who has time and qualifications for so important an undertaking.

In executing my design, I shall, in the *first* place, notice the *intellectual* character of our departed friend. This, as developed during his collegiate course, and in his subsequent life, was of a high order. The faculties of his mind were originally strong and active, and were improved by a thorough literary and scientific education, and a regular course of study in law. There are few men, whose acquisitions are more extensive or more solid. On all subjects to which he turned his attention, whether literary, political, or religious, he formed clear and comprehensive views; and whether he undertook to write or speak, he exhibited the riches of his

mind in a diction uniformly natural, perspicuous, and manly, and occasionally elegant and sublime. The extemporaneous addresses he made on public occasions were, as to manner, peculiarly modest and plain; but always full of vivid, pertinent, and weighty thought. His eloquence was often impressive, and sometimes powerful. He was distinguished by patience and fairness in his investigations, by the clearness and force of his reasoning, and by correctness and despatch in business. In all his habits, whether of thought or action, he showed as little liability to mistake, as can be expected of any man in this state of imperfection.

Such were his original powers of mind, and such the acquisitions he made, and the habits he formed by well-directed, persevering study.

Now it is upon the character of the mind, that our ability to do good in a great measure depends. If a man, in this respect, is superior to others, he will in all probability accomplish more good; if inferior, less good. The usefulness of his labors, unless prevented by special causes, will be very much in proportion to the amount of his intellectual powers and acquisitions.

This is a subject, on which young men, in different stages of their education, frequently entertain very erroneous views. They look forward to their future profession with impatience, and are in haste to engage in its labors, because they apprehend, that spending so much time in preparation will detract from the good they might accomplish. This is a great mistake. For all experience shows, that the whole of a man's usefulness is not so much according to the length of the time in which he is engaged in active service, as to the amount of his qualifications; and that if any one would be sure to rise to the highest degree of usefulness of which he is capable, he must spend more time than is common in preparation, leaving so much less for action.

The principle I have suggested is directly applicable to the case under consideration. The whole time which MR. EVARTS devoted to classical, scientific, and professional study unquestionably contributed to his usefulness. Even those acquisitions, which might have been thought less necessary, proved to be decidedly

serviceable in some part of the work assigned to him. For example; the knowledge he acquired of jurisprudence qualified him to perform that work of benevolence in behalf of the suffering Indians, which will be so lasting an honor to him in the view of all who love justice, and feel for the oppressed. And if some of his previous studies did not in the same manner come into direct use in the cause to which he was devoted; they still had an important influence in giving strength and elevation to the character of his mind, and excellence to his style of writing, and in preparing him better to devise and execute the measures, which were necessary to the accomplishment of his great object.

In the *second* place, I shall notice what belonged to his *moral and religious* character.

In the strict evangelical sense, MR. EVARTS was a good man. His life afforded the most satisfactory evidence that he had been born again; that he had experienced the renewing of the Holy Ghost; that he repented of sin, and that, from a deep sense of guilt and misery, he believed in Christ as the only Saviour; that he had communion with God, and rendered sincere and habitual obedience to his commands.

Now this spirit of Christian piety, flowing from the renewal of his heart, contributed in the highest degree to his usefulness. It was this which gave a right direction to his intellectual powers, and led him to make a right use of his acquisitions. It was this, which constituted the great inward motive to a useful life. Had he possessed the same intellectual furniture, without piety; his influence, instead of being beneficial, might have been directly mischievous. Like some very gifted men, he might have spent his life in spreading moral pestilence. And even if he had avoided this excess of iniquity, and honestly devoted himself to the business of the profession which he originally chose; what more would he have done, than to pursue his own private interests? The enlargement of the church, the universal spread of the gospel, and the salvation of the world, would have had no power over his heart. If you would see what, in that case, he would have been; look at the multitude of those who are possessed of richly furnished minds, but are destitute of religious principle. The lives

of such are spent in worldly indulgences. Even those actions which have a show of generosity, are dictated by a more refined selfishness; while their minds are strangers to holy love. Behold, then, the work which sovereign grace accomplishes! When God renews the hearts of sinners, he does a work of great love, not only to them, but to the world. He acts as a friend to the universe. They who are renewed have the spirit of sincere and active benevolence, and so are led, by a motive of exhaustless energy, to seek the highest interests of man. They bear the image of him *who went about doing good*. When that beloved friend, whose death we now mourn, was renewed by the divine Spirit, his heart, being turned from worldly, selfish objects, was brought under the influence of love to God and love to man. At his conversion he commenced a course of action, which was to fall in with a great system of benevolence, and in the end to promote the salvation of untold multitudes in Christian and heathen lands.

But holy affection, in order to produce its proper effects, must not only exist, but must exist in a lively, active state. Benevolence, feeble and dormant, or active only on particular occasions, can accomplish but little. The good to be accomplished by the agency of MR. EVARTS required a mind enlightened and purified in an uncommon degree;—it required a benevolence steady, ardent, and invincible. And such was the character to which, through the grace of God, he was formed. The affection which predominated in his breast, next to a supreme love to God, was compassion to the souls of men, and strong desire for the salvation of the heathen. This was the inward power which moved him. It was not a feverish heat, but the even pulsation and glow of health. What others might do from sudden excitement, or the spur of the occasion, he did from *principle*,—principle which was strong, uniform, and enduring,—which was the same morning and evening, at noon, and in the wakeful hours of night,—the same at the beginning and the end of the year,—the same in prosperity and in adversity. The moral principle which actuated him was as permanent, as the faculties of his soul; yea, as permanent as that indwelling Spirit of God, which caused its ex-



istence. Such a principle of action is essential to the highest degree of usefulness in any condition of life. And in any condition, it will have a salutary influence. It is the object of God's complacency ; and through his wise and immutable constitution, it will insure happiness to the possessor, and diffuse it among others. In whatever degree, or in whatever circumstances it may exist, it will not be lost. Though it lies concealed in the shades of private life, and shows itself only in the little circle of domestic duties, or in the exercises of secret devotion ; still it contributes to the blessedness of the universe.

But the religious principle of which I speak, was specially important and necessary to the chief agent in our 'Foreign-Missionary enterprise. In connexion with others, he had to accomplish a work of uncommon magnitude, and to encounter numberless and formidable difficulties. He was called to guide the vessel over a tempestuous and dangerous sea, when strong counter currents were to be stemmed, sudden changes of wind and weather to be encountered, and rocks and shoals to be avoided. In such an enterprise, it was indispensable that he should possess a principle of great firmness and strength ; a principle which would enable him to meet difficulties calmly ; which would raise him above all discouragements ; and which would contain within itself an exhaustless power of excitement, when all the natural springs of action failed. Such a principle he had. It consisted in *the religious affection*, which the Spirit of God produced and cherished in his heart. It was an affection which allied him to apostles and martyrs, and to Christ himself, and prepared him to endure any labors or sufferings, which were necessary to the welfare of his fellow men.

But I must notice one more particular attribute of his moral and religious character, which was of great importance to his usefulness ; and that is, *his scrupulous and inflexible integrity*.

This trait in his character was so manifest, that it raised him above suspicion. All who had opportunity to know his character, acknowledged him to be *an Israelite indeed, in whom was no guile*. The name of JEREMIAH EVARTS was associated in the public mind with a feeling of safety in regard to any interests

which might be committed to his care. This evident simplicity and uprightness of character freed him from the embarrassments and obstructions, which the suspicions of others always throw in the way of a man's usefulness, and secured to him the unwavering confidence and cordial support not only of his particular associates, but of all those in the community who were attached to the cause of missions. And let me say, that this manifest uprightness of character, which was indispensable to his success through the whole period of our Foreign-Missionary operations, was so in a preeminent degree, when, at the commencement of those operations, he was intrusted with the pecuniary concerns of the Board. To carry into effect in any good measure, the great design of the Board, it was necessary that large sums of money should be contributed, and sent in charity to various and distant countries;—a business hardly known among us at that time, and not easily accomplished even in the most favorable circumstances. Now who can suppose that both the rich and the poor would have voluntarily united from year to year, as they actually did, in raising the requisite funds, had they indulged a suspicion of the integrity or disinterestedness of the man to whom the funds were to be intrusted, and who was, from the beginning, one of the principal agents in conducting all the concerns of the Missions.

Having thus described the *intellectual*, and the *moral* and *religious* character of our lamented brother, and shown its important connexion with his usefulness, I proceed to say, *thirdly*, that he had a *remarkable completeness and symmetry of character*.

We not unfrequently meet with men, who are distinguished for particular virtues, while in regard to others they are notoriously deficient;—who have prominent excellencies, and prominent faults. There are some, who are endued with ardor, boldness, and disinterestedness, and other shining qualities for public life,—who are not to be subdued by opposition, nor daunted at the prospect of suffering, nor corrupted by bribes; who yet are subject to obvious failings in their private character. Some, who possess a variety of estimable qualities, have an irritability of temper which is excited on the slightest occasion. They are wanting in meekness and gentleness, in patience, and sympathy, and forgive-

ness. Some show that they are governed by selfishness, pride, and ambition. In regard to others, it is evident, that the applauses bestowed upon them have produced an uncommon growth of self-complacency and vanity, and that, in opposition to a divine precept, they *esteem themselves better than others*. Some, again, have a covetous, or a suspicious temper; or they are slaves to their bodily appetites; are wanting in Christian simplicity; or subject to rashness, fickleness, or indiscretion. Such is the lamentable fact in regard to the generality of those who in various respects exhibit valuable traits of character. But may I not say with propriety, it was otherwise with MR. EVARTS? Every one acquainted with his public life knows full well, that he was possessed of manly resolution, firmness, and activity. But he was possessed, in an equal degree, of humility, forbearance, and gentleness. He had as much of the amiable, as of the dignified. Who ever acquired a more perfect control over his passions, or maintained a more unruffled, equal state of mind? And he was, I doubt not, as solicitous to govern himself according to the precepts of God's word, in his thoughts, and feelings, and most secret actions, as in those parts of his life which were open to public scrutiny.

The attribute of character which I have now described, was of the highest consequence to his usefulness. By securing the approbation and favor of God, and the esteem and confidence of the community, it invested him with power to do good. Surely it was no small matter, that he should carry a character of such completeness into that high station which was allotted to him, and should bring it to bear upon all the interests with which he was intrusted.

But I am to speak also of the *symmetry* of his character. He not only had the various qualities which belong to a good character, but had them in *just proportion*. How different was he from those, who seem to have an exact conscience respecting one class of obligations, but are inattentive to others; from those who manifest much regard to that which is appropriately religious, and but little to that which relates to common life,—who reverence the Sabbath, and regularly attend to its public ser-



vices, but are chargeable with irregularities of temper and conduct during the week. And on the other hand, how different was he from those, who are exact in respect to their domestic and social obligations, but regardless of those which are of a more public nature, or more directly religious. Let me not, however, be understood to imply that he had an excellence of character, which was free from all deficiency and all blemish. To say that he attained perfection, or that he was *near* being perfect, would be to contradict the deep, inward convictions he had of his own failings and sins, and his sincere confessions, and penitence, and self-abhorrence before God; and it would be to overlook that pure and spiritual law which no Christian on earth perfectly obeys in heart and in action, for a single day, or a single moment of his life. But if the character of MR. EVARTS is viewed in comparison with that of good men generally, I think it must appear to great advantage in respect to completeness and symmetry. Who that knew him, ever thought that any part of what constitutes a good character was wanting in him, or that some of his intellectual or moral qualities grew to excess, while others, equally important, were below their proper measure? This excellence of character was doubtless owing in some measure to the influence of favorable circumstances, and more, to his own diligent and skilful efforts; but it was owing chiefly and ultimately, to the good pleasure of God, and the operation of his Spirit. To this divine cause we must attribute all human excellence, and all the efficacy of human exertion.

The public character of MR. EVARTS exhibited the symmetry abovementioned, in one very important respect. With as much *ardor* as was necessary to the highest degree of effort which could be permanently sustained, he united a *sound judgment*. Had the momentous concerns of our Foreign Missions been committed to a man of more zeal, and less discretion; the consequence might have been disastrous. There is a degree of heat, which is apt to discompose the mind, and to produce disorder. If a man's ardor goes beyond the bounds of moderation, and his zeal breaks loose from his judgment; the world will be afraid to trust him. He may have more active power, and for

a time, accomplish more good, than any other man. Still it will be dangerous to confide in him ; because, in one rash hour, he may expose to ruin all the interests committed to his care. The zeal of MR. EVARTS did indeed rise to a high degree of warmth ; but it had no enthusiastic effervescence, no convulsive starts, no violence. It was just sufficient to put his mind into the fittest state for deliberation and effort ;—just sufficient to afford the necessary excitement to his reason, his invention, and all his active powers. It was invariably associated with the most tranquil operations of a well furnished intellect ; and it led him to adopt a system of measures of as high a character, as existing circumstances would admit ; a system which he pursued from year to year, and through successive years, with unflinching resolution, and with increasing evidence that it was both wise and practicable.

Permit me to add, that the general aspect of his mind which I have noticed, appeared in the sober and scriptural views he entertained respecting the doctrines of Christianity. No man was more free from sectarian prejudice, and a pertinacious attachment to old opinions. And yet no man was more open and determined in opposition to novelties in religion, or more grieved at any departure from the simplicity of the gospel. On all questions of controversy at the present day, whether of primary or secondary consequence, his habit of thinking was at once cautious and decided, and was conformed to the settled orthodoxy of New England, and, in my apprehension, to the dictates of reason and revelation. His knowledge of theology was so extensive, and his manner of reasoning, both on polemic and practical points, was so candid and perspicuous, that his conversation was highly prized by the most intelligent Christians, as a source of pleasure and improvement. It is hardly necessary to add, that the sober and judicious opinions, which he was known to entertain on the subject of religion, procured for him a still higher place in the esteem of the community, and gave an additional influence to his efforts in the cause of Missions.

I have now noticed the chief of those intellectual and moral properties which prepared our departed friend for eminent usefulness. But of what utility would all these excellent properties

have been, had they not been brought into actual exercise? How little good comparatively would he have done, had he been left in the shades of private life, or had he been chiefly devoted to the acquisition of wealth by professional labor? But the God who made him, and who ordered all the circumstances of his early life, and furnished him with so many valuable qualifications, designed him for a particular work, and in due time prepared the way for him to enter upon it. It was a short time after he came to this vicinity, that a Foreign Mission from America was commenced, and the management of its interests committed to a Board of Commissioners. From the first, MR. EVARTS was employed in the executive business of the Board. Besides being Treasurer, he was intimately associated with DR. WORCESTER, the Corresponding Secretary, in conducting the correspondence, and in all the concerns of our growing missions. By this course of labor for about ten years, he became well qualified for the office of Secretary, when it was vacated by the death of DR. WORCESTER, and when the burden of its responsibilities and cares had been so much increased by the increase of missionary interest in our country. This was the station for which divine providence raised him up, and to which the peculiar structure of his mind was every way suited. In this station all his intellectual powers and moral principles were brought into constant and vigorous action, and his whole character, as might have been reasonably expected, experienced a sensible and rapid growth. It was by the labors of this station,—for which he had been so long preparing, and for which he was so eminently qualified, that he helped to produce those great results which have been witnessed, and arrived at his proper degree of usefulness.

After MR. EVARTS entered on the station assigned him, he consecrated his time and influence to the cause of Missions among the heathen. This was his object. Towards this his thoughts, his studies, his exertions directly tended. I need not tell you how much it would have detracted from his usefulness, had he connected other things with this, as favorite objects of pursuit; had he, for example, indulged a literary ambition, a taste for the fine arts, or a fondness for wealth. But he had chosen his ob-

ject; and in point of excellence, the world had nothing that could be compared with it. To this he devoted his life. Not that he disregarded any private obligations;—not that he undervalued any other object of Christian benevolence or patriotism, or lost his love for literature and science, or for any thing which could adorn the mind, or promote the comfort of society;—not that he was wanting in punctuality, or inattentive to any of the courtesies which belong to social or domestic intercourse. He showed, that a man in the most important station has no occasion to neglect his less important duties. He showed, that a great man has no need to have either great faults, or little faults. But to whatever other objects he occasionally turned his attention, he never lost sight of the cause of Missions. To this he devoted his first thoughts, his warmest affections, and his best labors. He acted on the principle, that if a man would accomplish the highest degree of good, he must have only one great object, and must pursue that object with steady resolution, and zeal, and perseverance.

The object to which he thus devoted himself, and the efforts which he made, were of such a nature as to be followed by *durable* effects,—by a *continuity* of good. This may perhaps be called Christian, or spiritual *economy*. We have but limited powers of body and mind, a limited time, limited means and opportunities to do good. Now it is the dictate of Christian wisdom, that we should fix upon that mode of doing good, which will, on the whole, turn to the best account. A man may successfully employ his time and talents in promoting the *temporal* welfare of his fellow men. But the object he seeks is not durable. It may be something now; but soon it passes away, and is forgotten. Such is the transitory nature of all worldly interest, and worldly pleasure. Though we expend ever so much time, and talent, and labor upon it, what is it but vanity in the end?

Now certainly it is not good economy, it is not according to sound wisdom, that we should fill up the little space of time, and use the little power we have, in pursuit of a good which has no solid worth, and will last but a moment. If there is a good which is really excellent and durable, let us choose that. It was



the appointment of Christ, that his apostles should bear much fruit, and that their fruit should *remain*. What they did, produced *permanent* effects ;—it conduced to a good which was *spiritual* and *everlasting*. Our beloved Secretary labored for the same object. He was of one heart with the apostles, who labored to save those that were lost. His efforts, like theirs, were upon a large scale. Had he promoted the salvation of a single individual, he would have done a great and good work. But his efforts were directed to the highest good of communities and nations ; to the salvation of the world. And if respect is had to the wisdom of the measures which were adopted, and which were all calculated for permanent effect ;—if respect is had to the fact, that the extensive and systematic operations, in which he was so intensely engaged, and which have already been attended with such animating success, are to lead on to other measures, far more extensive, and far more successful—that the missionary zeal, which he helped to kindle up in the church, is to burn with a still purer and brighter flame ; and if respect is had to the unquestionable fact, that his labors were, by the gracious appointments of heaven, closely connected with the ultimate overthrow of idolatry, and the establishment of Christ's kingdom in pagan lands ; the good resulting from his agency will appear too great for human language to describe, or an angel's mind to comprehend.

In pursuing the object which was so dear to his heart, he was particularly aware, that he needed the cordial assistance of fellow Christians around him, and of the community at large. The influence of a man in any station, especially in one that is public and very difficult, may be increased in a degree above computation by being skilfully united with the influence of others. We are social beings, and by the very constitution of our nature, are mutually dependent. Let human agency in any case be completely insulated, and it can have no efficiency. To accomplish any thing important, we must act together. What is deficient in one man, is to be supplied by others,—who, though not superior to him in the general attributes of character, may be able to afford him the counsel and aid which he needs. MR. EVARTS

successfully availed himself of this important principle ; and he always did it with evident satisfaction. Who was ever more unassuming ; or more free from that self-sufficiency, and folly, which makes a man reluctant to acknowledge himself indebted in any way to the judgment or foresight of others ? Who ever came nearer to a full compliance with the direction of the apostle, that, *in lowliness of mind, each should esteem others better than himself?* His truly modest and humble disposition, joined with his deep solicitude that every thing should be done in the best manner, rendered him very desirous of counsel and aid from his brethren, and heartily willing to own himself under obligation to them, even where it was evident that he was the man who possessed the best information, and the highest degree of wisdom, in regard to the subject under consideration.

But while he looked to his fellow Christians for counsel and assistance, it conduced still more to his success, that, *in humble, fervent prayer, he sought help of God.* This might have been mentioned as belonging to his religious character. But I have rather chosen to mention it here, as constituting an important part of those efforts, by which he contributed most effectually to the success of the Missionary cause. He had a deep sense of his weakness and dependence, and of the utter fruitlessness of all human endeavours, without the divine blessing. In a manner very far removed from all extravagance, and at the same time furnishing the strongest motives to devout importunity, he believed in the efficacy of prayer. And his belief was grounded on the best possible reasons,—the immutable promise of God, and the actual course of his providence. The devout supplications which he and his associates in office presented to God in all their meetings for business, together with the monthly, and weekly, and daily prayers of the great body of Christians in this land, and in other lands, have undoubtedly exerted a higher and more efficacious influence, than any other means, in promoting the spread of the gospel and the conversion of the heathen world. Without the spirit of prayer, and the blessing of God which it secures, other efforts would have proved abortive. Suppose prayer had been omitted, and the time spent in this duty by the

officers and members of the Board, by ministers, and all the friends of missions, had been spent in some other way, yea, in any other way; what would have been the consequence, but a total failure of the Missionary enterprise? All our exertions could have effected nothing; or I might say, no proper exertions would ever have been made. Judging by the word of God, we cannot doubt, that sincere, fervent prayer, though by an unseen influence, really does more towards accomplishing the great objects of benevolence, than all human endeavours beside. For what can human endeavours do,—what can talents or attainments do, without the help of God? And how can that help be obtained, except by prayer?

Thus, in attempting to perform the part assigned to me on the present occasion, I have noticed those attributes of character, and those other circumstances, which contributed most directly to the usefulness of the beloved and honored man, whose death we deplore.

Let us now endeavour to derive profit to ourselves from the subject which we have contemplated, and to bring it to bear, with a salutary influence, upon all the sacred interests with which we are connected.—Among the many useful lessons which it is suited to teach, I can suggest only the following.

1. We see how Christians may *grow in grace, and become eminently holy.*

On this point permit me to address myself particularly to those young men, who are coming forward to labor in the cause of Christ. Our departed friend attained to eminent holiness; and why may not you? What advantages had he to grow in grace, which are not within *your* reach? What motive urged *him* to diligence in the service of God, which does not urge *you*? What divine assistance did he obtain and enjoy, which you may not obtain in the same way, and enjoy in the same measure? As God has provided for you the same Bible, the same Sabbath, the same throne of grace, the same salutary discipline of his providence, and the same influences of his Spirit; why may you not, by proper diligence, attain to the same degree of holiness?

But there is one particular view of this subject, which I consider to be of special importance. The *employment* of Mr. EVARTS was unquestionably among the most powerful causes of his growth in piety. He was active in doing good—was continually consulting and laboring for the salvation of men, particularly the heathen. This brought into lively exercise all the pious affections of his heart, and so contributed to increase them. And if he was occasionally so engrossed with his great object, as to forget himself; his sanctification was not impeded on that account.—If a Christian wishes to advance in holiness, let him engage, with all his heart, in some benevolent and pious work. As far as may be, let him choose his calling with a view to this important end. At the present day, there is a great variety of ways in which good may be done. There can be no lack of opportunity to any. Let every Christian, then, be devoted to some work of benevolence. And if he aspires to improve his character in the highest degree; let him be active in such a way, as will require him to exercise zeal and fortitude, to practise self-denial, and endure sufferings. This is the way, and according to the wise appointment of God, the only way, to rise high in spiritual attainments. If then we covet the best gifts of heaven, let us use the right means to obtain them. If it is our desire to mortify sin, and to cultivate a spirit of elevated piety; let us engage with ardor in works of piety. And let us take care to pursue a course, which will not only be favorable to the good dispositions which we wish to cherish, but directly opposed to the sinful propensities and habits which we wish to overcome. Are we conscious of a culpable indolence? Then let us do good in a way which will require diligent personal effort. Have we an inordinate love of money? Then let us be frequent and liberal in our contributions, and so diminish those treasures which are the idols of our hearts. And if any are exposed to feelings of vanity on account of their making donations which are public and honorable; let them abound also in smaller gifts, in private charities to the destitute, *not letting their left hand know what their right hand doeth*, and thus guarding their minds against the hurtful influence of applause.—If it has been our habit to treat our-



selves softly and delicately, and to make our own gratification a special object of pursuit, and if in consequence of this, we are deficient in the more manly, noble virtues ; then let us prefer services which are somewhat severe, and never start back from any toil, hardship or danger which may meet us in the path of duty. —If our hearts are prone to indulge feelings of distrust in regard to the perfections or the providence of God ; it will be of particular importance to us to pursue a course, which will often compel us to give up every ground of confidence but the promise and faithfulness of God, and to rely on him alone for the supply of our wants, the relief of our distresses, and the success of our undertakings. The same might be said in regard to other particulars. Now it is obvious, that such a work as that in which our departed friend was enlisted, is eminently fitted to promote the divine life. Any one who, from pure motives, makes a full surrender of himself to the cause of Missions, and, either at home or abroad, devotes his talents and his life to the salvation of the heathen, will be under the best advantages to grow in the spirit of piety. And it will doubtless appear in the great day, when all characters, and all which has helped to form them, shall be revealed, that the holiness which eminent saints in all periods of the church have attained, was owing in no small degree, under God, to the exertions they made and the sufferings they endured for the present and eternal welfare of their fellow men.

2. We see that *sincere devotion to God, and diligence in doing good, are followed by the most happy results.* Great peace have they who love God's law. They who forsake all for Christ shall receive an hundred fold even in the present time. Our deceased brother found this true in his own case. He enjoyed the cordial affection and confidence not only of the Prudential Committee and the American Board, but of all the friends of Missions and the friends of Christ. And he had the respect of the public generally ;—not only of those who agreed with him in religious opinion and feeling, but of those who differed from him ; and not only of those who favored the interest he sought, but of those who opposed it. In addition to all this, he had the pleas-

ure of being continually conversant with objects which were congenial to his taste ;—objects which were gratifying to his benevolent and pious heart ; and the pleasure of witnessing the unexpected success of the Missionary cause. He was also favored with a quiet, contented mind, with the consolations of hope, and with many tokens of the divine presence and approbation. He was blessed of God in his family, and in his own soul. And when we come to the closing scene of his life, we may well exclaim,—“Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright ; for the end of that man is peace.” The inward composure which he habitually enjoyed after he devoted himself to the service of Christ, he continued in a remarkable degree to enjoy during his last sickness. The prevailing state of his mind may be learnt in some measure from the following paper, which he wrote, Feb. 27, 1831, it being the Sabbath, half past eleven, A. M. He was on board the ship *Fama*, in sight of Abaco, one of the Bahama Islands, twelve days after he sailed from Boston for Cuba.

“Daily, and many times a day, I have been disposed, I trust, to acknowledge the goodness of God, and to consecrate myself anew to his service. I had thought of making a formal and written consecration of myself to the Lord this forenoon : but my mind is so weighed down by my feeble body, that I can write nothing, except of the simplest kind, and cannot adequately dwell upon the amazing theme of being a servant of God, and of having Him for my portion forever.”

At half past 3, P. M. he wrote thus,—“We have turned the south west end of Abaco. I have looked at this work of God, which it is not likely I shall see again ;—and have turned my thoughts many times to the great and blessed Creator of all.

“Here, in this sea, I consecrate myself to God as my chief good :—to him as my heavenly Father, infinitely kind and tender of his children ;—to him as my kind and merciful Redeemer, by whose blood and merits alone I do hope for salvation ;—to him as the beneficent renewer and sanctifier of the saved. I implore the forgiveness of my numerous and aggravated transgressions ; and I ask that my remaining time and strength may be employed for the glory of God my portion, and for the good of his creatures.”

“Whether I make my grave on the land, or in the ocean, I submit cheerfully to Him. It will be as He pleases; and so it should be. I pray that the circumstances of my death, be it sooner or later, may be favorable to religion; that I may not deceive myself in the great concerns of my soul;—that I may depart in peace, and be received, through infinite mercy, to the everlasting kingdom of my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.”

In the near prospect of death he showed a most happy tranquillity. He had that peace of God which passeth all understanding. Who would not think himself rewarded for the toils and sufferings of a whole life, yea, of a thousand years, by what this faithful servant of Christ was permitted to enjoy just before his decease, when God caused so wonderful a light to shine upon his soul. He was at that time in a kind, Christian family in Charleston S. C., but far removed from his beloved partner and children, whom he had just before particularly and most devoutly commended to God. Seeming to be nearly exhausted, he very tenderly expressed his affection for his Saviour. . . . .  
 . . . . . Soon after, he burst forth with expressions of rapture which cannot be described. “Praise him, praise him, praise him in a way which you know not of.” And when it was said, “You will soon see Jesus as he is, and will then know how to praise him;” he exclaimed,—“Wonderful, wonderful, wonderful glory! We cannot comprehend—wonderful glory! I will praise, I will praise him! . . . . Wonderful—glory—Jesus reigns.”

This was no vision of enthusiasm—no feverish excitement of passion—no delirium of a heated brain. What man was ever better shielded, than he, against all mental delusion, and all undue excitement? At that time in particular, a variety of circumstances which might be related, proved beyond any doubt, that he was perfectly rational and self-possessed. That which he experienced was doubtless like what apostles, and martyrs, and eminent saints have often experienced in a dying hour, when, through the special influence of the Holy Spirit, they have had clear views of the glory of their Saviour, and of their eternal inheritance, and have earnestly desired to be absent from the body, and present with the Lord.

May God give me, in my last moments, what our dear brother enjoyed, when that vision of glory burst upon his astonished view, and I will gladly bid farewell to all that the world contains. The joy he tasted was unspeakable and full of glory. Even before he left the body, he seemed to stand upon the threshold of heaven.

And what, think you, must be the enjoyment of such a Christian in heaven,—with a capacity so enlarged,—with the powers of reason so active,—with affections and desires so pure, and so elevated,—what must be his enjoyment in the presence of him whom his soul loveth, in the society of angels and saints, and in the society of no small number, brought to that happy world by means of his faithful labors! Neither eye hath seen, nor ear heard, nor can the heart of man conceive what such a saint enjoys, when he comes to be where Jesus is. Oh! what rest after years of wearisome labor, and toil, and conflict with sin! Oh! what quietness and ease, after so much sickness and pain! Oh! what blessedness, to be free forever from the feeling, and the sight of moral pollution, to be like the Saviour, and to see him as he is, and to drink of the river of pleasure which flows at the right hand of God!

To the mourning widow, and children, and other relatives, there are unfailling sources of consolation. They have sympathizing friends; a present and merciful God; the great and precious promises of his word; and a throne of grace. They have the happiness of knowing that *Jesus reigns*, and that all things will work together for good to them who love God, and are called according to his purpose. Through the mercy of heaven, these are the rich consolations which afflicted Christians commonly enjoy, and they are sufficient to quiet the agitated breast, and to sooth every grief. But the mourning relatives in this case have consolations which are *not* common. When a man dies, yea, when a good man dies; how seldom is it the fact, that he leaves a character entirely unblemished, even in the view of his most affectionate and partial friends! And if in the fullness of their hearts, they begin to speak of him in the language of high respect and honor, they are soon checked by the recollection of something



which marred his Christian reputation. They do indeed cherish a most cordial esteem and love for his amiable and virtuous qualities ; but they sigh, that their thoughts cannot range with delight over his *whole* character and life. They cannot but regard it as a subject of deep regret, that he fell so far short of that complete excellence, which they wished him to attain. But through the grace of God, such was not the fact in regard to our departed friend. The sorrow, which the afflicted relatives feel for the loss of one so dear to them, is not embittered by the recollection of any noticeable failings in his character, or any palpable errors in his conduct. Theirs is the happiness of knowing, that the beloved partner, parent, and friend, who has been removed from their sight, was not only adorned with a combination of excellencies, but was remarkably free from blemishes. They must ever regard it as a precious blessing, that they have been so closely allied to one, whose example was so pure, so shining, and so attractive. And they must ever find the events of his private and public life, a subject of the most delightful and improving reflection. It was a life that will bear to be examined, and that deserves to be copied. What a rich inheritance to his bereaved family ! While they remember the great goodness of God in this respect, and their hearts overflow with gratitude ; the bitterness of their grief will pass away. The Lord grant, that they may be so happy, through the remainder of life, as to imitate the lovely example which has been placed before their eyes, and by humble, active piety, to follow that dear friend, who through faith and patience inherits the promises.

To the members of the Prudential Committee and other Officers of the Board, this occasion is connected with so many subjects of intense interest, that I know not where to begin, or where to end. It must, dear brethren, be a source of the sincerest satisfaction to us, that the chief agency in directing and executing the momentous business of our Foreign Missions, was committed to a man, who possessed such qualifications, and in whom not only his immediate associates, but the Christian community had such confidence. In this great and difficult work, it has been our hap-

py lot to be united with one, whose high intellectual endowments were combined with the most lovely social qualities ;—whose friendship was uniform and undissembled,—not overstrained in ardor, but pure, impartial, and truly Christian ; and who was a pattern of meekness, patience, and fidelity. You well know it has long been the public sentiment, that no man can be found whose characted is more upright and disinterested, than that of MR. EVARTS. After twenty years intimate acquaintance with him, and after having been, most of us, associated with him for ten years in conducting the concerns of the Board, we can give our united testimony to the justice of this sentiment ; and can say of him, as truly as of any man, “ that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not by fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, he had his conversation in the world.”

But the man whose name is so dear to us, and whose labors have been so useful, has been removed from us by the stroke of death. Neither the high importance of his office, nor his eminent endowments, nor the affections of his friends, nor the prayers of those who love Zion, could prevent or delay his departure. He is gone from us, and we shall see his face no more. The death of such a man at such a time, we feel to be a very afflictive and distressing event.—But though in itself so afflictive, it naturally suggests subjects, which are fitted to awaken lively gratitude to God, and to encourage us in the work of spreading the gospel. For we cannot but remember, that God in mercy *gave* what he has now taken away. And is it a small matter, that, at the critical period when the Foreign Mission from America was commenced, and during the first years of its progress, divine Providence raised up such men as WORCESTER and EVARTS, to be the chief agents in the work ? Where is the society,—where the benevolent enterprise, which has in this and other respects, enjoyed more visible tokens of the divine favor ? The services of such a man, as our late Secretary, must be important to any cause, at any time. But the work which the friends of Missions undertook twenty years ago, was a work of vast magnitude and difficulty. A mere kindling up of temporary zeal,—a few desultory efforts could accomplish nothing. There was a necessity for a system

of operations, wisely planned, and ably and perseveringly executed. The undertaking called for men of large views, and sound judgment,—of devoted piety and invincible resolution; men trained to sober deliberation, and efficient action, and not likely to fail either in concerting or in executing measures; men of so much fire, as to warm the hearts of others, and yet so cool and discreet, as to secure their confidence; men too, who could bring weight of character to the work, instead of depending on the work for character. Now that God in his providence raised up just such men, as the new and arduous enterprise required, and that he continued one of them ten years, and the other twenty, as principal agents of the Board, and with a success, which has filled the Christian world with admiration and joy;—this, brethren, we must record as among the most visible and encouraging tokens of God's special favor.—Shall we then faint under the stroke of his hand? Shall we look forward to the future with distrust and fear, and be ready to abandon the cause of Missions? Shall we even pursue that cause with less zeal, or less hope of success? No. Far be it from us, that we should thus dishonor the name of God. It is enough for us that, although good men die, the LORD lives, and is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. The cause to which we are devoted is his cause. We have engaged in it in obedience to his command. And we go forward in our endeavours to promote it, with full reliance on his promised aid. We are confident, that he who has all power in heaven and earth, will be present with us in every emergency; that he will prepare men for every post of usefulness; that he will crown with success whatever is done for the enlargement of his church, and finally cause the gospel to triumph in every place.

How often, brethren, have you seen the worthlessness of a life devoted to ambitious and worldly pursuits! See now, how useful and happy is a life devoted to God! See how much one man of fervent piety and active benevolence may accomplish in a short time! The character we have contemplated is a good pattern for all men in public stations. Let us copy it faithfully. Let the sober maxims, the principles of enlarged and disinterested benev-

olence, which governed the conduct of our beloved Secretary, pervade all our counsels and labors.

Every hour we are employed in a work so benevolent and sacred, should remind us of our high obligations, and increase our endeavours to be holy as Christ is holy. When we look back upon days and years that are past, and remember how near we have been to an eminently good man, now in heaven; we should be incited to do with our might whatsoever our hand findeth to do, and to be ready for the coming of our Lord. In imitation of our beloved brother, who now rests from his labors, let us strive to have our great work so finished, and all our affairs, whether public or private, so arranged and settled, that when our last day comes, we may be free from anxious cares, and may be able to say with a peace which the world cannot give, LORD JESUS, *receive my spirit.*

To conclude. Dear brethren and friends, we have been calling to mind the piety and usefulness of a fellow mortal, and have been considering him as a suitable pattern for our imitation. The time we have devoted to the contemplation of so excellent a character, will, I hope, conduce to our improvement.—But be it remembered, there is a character vastly more exalted. There is an excellence and glory, both intellectual and moral, infinitely surpassing all that is human. It shines forth in this fair creation above us and around us. It shines forth especially in the face of JESUS CHRIST. Now while we look with delight upon human excellence, shall we close our eyes to that which is divine? While we gaze upon a dim taper, shall we be blind to the light of day? Are we filled with admiration at the endowments of man, who is of yesterday? What adoring thoughts then should we have of the *high and lofty One who inhabiteth eternity!* Before that great and glorious Being, the greatest of men, and the greatest of angels, are *as the small dust of the balance.* The brightest excellence we behold in creation is only a ray from the inexhaustible fountain of light.—Have we confidence in a child of earth, because he evinces a small degree of intelligence and faithfulness? What unwavering trust then should we repose in God, whose understanding is



infinite, and whose faithfulness never fails! And finally: do emotions of gratitude rise in our hearts, while we recollect the benevolent and useful actions which a feeble, imperfect man performed during a few, fleeting years? Oh! how much warmer, nobler gratitude should glow within us towards that infinite Being, from whom cometh all the goodness and all the usefulness of his creatures, and all the happiness of earth and of heaven;—whose love has a length, and breadth, and depth, and height, passing all understanding; and who is so great in power and so excellent in working, that he accomplishes more good in a single moment, and by a single act of his will, than all created beings can accomplish in ten thousand ages! “Blessed, then, be the LORD God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things; and blessed be his glorious name forever; and let the whole earth be filled with his glory. AMEN.”

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